

Application No.: 09/760,296
Attorney Docket No. 52493.000112

Claims 1-40 are pending in the application. By this Amendment, claims 6, 17, 28 and 36 are amended. Reconsideration and allowance in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks are respectfully requested. Applicant believes that the application is in condition for allowance and notice thereof is respectfully requested. No new matter has been added by this Amendment.

I. The 35 U.S.C. §102 Rejection based on Ouchi

In the Office Action, claims 1-5, 17-24, and 26-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ouchi, U.S. Patent No. 6,370,567.

The Office Action asserts that Ouchi teaches the invention as claimed including an e-mail based workflow system and method. The Office Action notes in particular the Abstract of Ouchi. The Office Action asserts that as to claim 1, Ouchi teaches a method for routing information in a data processing system comprising the steps of checking an inbox periodically to determine if new data has been received in the inbox (see figs. 1-3; col. 5, lines 1-55, Ouchi discloses that form route manager periodically checks inbox for new data); as well as determining a destination for the new data based on a routing table associated with the inbox if new data has been received in the inbox; and transmitting the new data to the determined destination (see col. 5, line 60- Col. 6, line 35; col. 7-8). The Office Action further asserts that Ouchi discloses that the form router determines a destination for the data based on a routing table.

In the present application, claim 1 recites a method for routing information in a data processing system comprising the steps of checking an inbox periodically to determine if new data has been received in the inbox; determining a destination for the new data based on a routing table associated with the inbox if new data has been received in the inbox; and

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transmitting the new data to the determined destination. It is respectfully submitted that Ouchi fails to teach or suggest each and every feature of the claimed invention, as recited in claim 1.

Ouchi is directed to e-mail based workflow systems and methods of distributing e-mail. In the Abstract, Ouchi describes that the Ouchi invention relates to message-based workflow systems and methods for computer networks. Ouchi teaches that in one embodiment, the invention provides: (1) an e-mail system; (2) PC's, terminals, and/or workstations; and (3) a form route manager connected by the e-mail system, for example.

Further, in column 5, lines 1-37, Ouchi teaches aspects of a form route manager 35. Ouchi describes that the function of the form route manager 35 is illustrated in the flowchart in FIG. 5. Further, Ouchi describes that the route is a step-by-step sequence of e-mail addresses. The mailbox for the form route manager is assigned an e-mail address. The e-mails addressed to the form route manager are received in the in-box 33. Then, Ouchi describes that at step 52, the form route manager checks if the e-mail is in the in-box 33. If there is an e-mail, it checks at step 53 if the e-mail is sent from an e-mail address that is the last step in the route. If it is the last step in the route, the e-mail is deleted at step 54 from the in-box. If it is not the last step, at step 55, a step field is set to the next step in the route and the e-mail address is set to the e-mail address of the next step in the route.

Ouchi further describes that an e-mail is sent to the next e-mail address by using out-box 34. The e-mail is deleted at step 54 from the in-box. In other words, the form route manager receives an e-mail from an e-mail address in the route and sends it to the next e-mail address in the route. If the e-mail is from the e-mail address that is the last step in the route, the e-mail is not sent further.

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In column 5, lines 52-57, Ouchi further teaches that the form route manager provides a central, sequential e-mail distribution function based on the step-by-step sequence of a route where a computer in the network sends an e-mail to the form route manager and the form route manager sends the e-mail to the next computer in the route.

It is respectfully submitted that Ouchi fails to teach or suggest the claimed invention, and that Ouchi is fundamentally different than Ouchi. Ouchi very much relates to the manipulation of e-mails and e-mail distribution. In sharp contrast, the claimed invention is not directed to e-mails. Applicant of course acknowledges that patentability is based on the claimed invention. It is submitted that this distinction between Ouchi and the present invention, i.e., that the present invention is not directed to e-mails and is distinct from Ouchi, is indeed embodied in claim 1.

Specifically, claim 1 recites "checking an inbox periodically to determine if new data has been received in the inbox". It is respectfully submitted that Ouchi fails to teach or suggest this feature. To explain, it is noted that Ouchi describes in column 5, line 4-7, that at step 52 of Fig. 5, the form route manager checks if the e-mail is in the in-box 33; and that if there is an e-mail, it checks at step 53 if the e-mail is sent from an e-mail address that is the last step in the route. However, this checking is understood to relate to, and be triggered by, the receipt of an e-mail, as opposed to any periodic checking so as to teach the claimed invention. That is, for example, Ouchi teaches in column 15, lines 29-47, that the form route manager has memory to save receipt indicators of the asynchronous receipt of e-mails 201 and 202 before sending the e-mail to e-mail address C1 and that the form route manager receives either e-mail 201 or 202 and sets an indicator to show one e-mail was received and checks the other indicator to determine if the other e-mail was received. In column 15, Ouchi further discloses that when message 202 is received, the form route manager sends e-mail 203 to the next step in the route, e-mail address C.

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Also, in column 5, lines 23-37, Ouchi describes the message-based workflow user receives the workflow document as e-mail in the in-box 33. The user selects 58 the e-mail from the in-box 33, opens the e-mail, sets the e-mail address to that of the form route manager, processes the workflow document in the e-mail, and sends the e-mail back to the form route manager using the out-box 34. Ouchi describes the form route manager receives the e-mail in the in-box, and if this is not the last step in the route, sends the e-mail to the next e-mail address as described earlier. Further, in column 6, lines 39-43, Ouchi teaches the form route manager receives the e-mail 61, and determines from STEP=1 and the route that the next e-mail address is B and the next step is 2. The form route manager updates STEP=2 and sends the workflow document R as e-mail 62 to e-mail address B.

However, in these various teachings, it is submitted that Ouchi fails to teach or suggest the invention of claim 1, and in particular, the feature relating to checking an inbox periodically to determine if new data has been received in the inbox. For example, in accordance with one embodiment of the invention, the present application describes on page 8, lines 23-29, that at step 301, the information router 201 may periodically check each of the inboxes 231-233 for new data packages. The inboxes 231-233 may receive data packages from the external systems 211-213. The external systems 211-213 may transmit a data package directly to the inboxes 231-233, respectively, or each of the external systems 211-213 may place the data package to be transmitted to the information router 201 in an outbox 241, 242 or 243 of the respective external systems 211, 212 or 213. Applicant submits that Ouchi is different from the present invention, as well as the claimed invention.

Applicant further notes that claim 1 recites a method for routing information in a *data processing system*. Applicant acknowledge that the recitation of an "inbox" in claim 1, for

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example, sounds of an e-mail system. However, Applicant respectfully asserts that the present application, as viewed in its totality, clearly does not relate to an e-mail system. Rather, as is articulated in the application, the present invention relates generally to data processing systems, and more particularly to routing information in data processing systems. Accordingly, the language of claim 1 reciting routing information in a *data processing system* further distinguishes the claimed invention from the teachings of Ouchi.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 defines patentable subject matter for at least the reasons set forth above. Further, it is submitted that independent claim 17 defines patentable subject matter for reasons similar to those set forth with respect to claim 1.

Further, the various dependent claims define patentable subject matter based on their various dependencies on the independent claims, as well as the additional features such dependent claims recite. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102 is respectfully requested.

II. The 35 U.S.C. §103 Rejection Based on Ouchi

In the Office Action, claims 6-16, 25, and 28-40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ouchi.

Applicant submits that Ouchi fails to teach or suggest the claimed invention for the reasons set forth above. That is, the Office Action in the 35 U.S.C. §103 rejection asserts various deficiencies of Ouchi vis-à-vis the claimed invention. For example, the Office Action asserts that Ouchi fails to teach the claimed limitation of a descriptor file, but that Ouchi does teach that a control field is used for indexing into the routing table for finding a path to be used to route the document. The Office Action asserts that Ouchi does not teach the limitation of an internal error document storage directory; and does not teach the limitation of a second external system for

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specialized handling. Further, the Office Action asserts that Ouchi fails to teach the limitation of an error queue.

The Office Action attempts to modify Ouchi to overcome the asserted deficiencies as set forth in the Office Action. However, it is respectfully submitted that even if it were obvious to modify Ouchi as asserted in the Office Action, which is not admitted by Applicant to be so, Ouchi would still fail to teach or suggest the claimed invention for the reasons set forth above.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 6, 28 and 36 define patentable subject matter for reasons similar to claim 1, discussed above.

Further, the various dependent claims define patentable subject matter based on their various dependencies on the independent claims, as well as the additional features such dependent claims recite.

Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

For at least the reasons outlined above, Applicant respectfully asserts that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

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For any fees due in connection with filing this Response the Commissioner is hereby
authorized to charge the undersigned's Deposit Account No. 50-0206.

Respectfully submitted,
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Date: February 3, 2005

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